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The President's Daily Brief

23 March 1971

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Argentine Army commander Lanusse has removed President Levingston and a junta has assumed command. *(Page 1)*

The situation in Luang Prabang is assessed on *Page 2*.

Peking says Japanese Government leaders are welcome at any time. *(Page 3)*

A four-state Arab federation may be formed on Sunday. *(Page 4)*

The Pakistan National Assembly has been postponed again but broad outlines of an agreed solution may have been reached. *(Page 5)*

The Turkish situation remains in flux. *(Page 5)*

Japanese Communist Party representatives will attend the Soviet party congress. *(Page 5)*

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ARGENTINA

The shaky situation in the country since the violent riots in the city of Cordoba last week finally erupted yesterday and early this morning. President Levingston made an abortive effort to oust army commander General Alejandro Lanusse and when it failed a junta of the commanders of the three armed services assumed power and removed the President. The junta announced that it would "reassume political power until the objectives of the Argentine revolution are fulfilled."

> *General Lanusse will certainly be the strongman in this apparent attempt at collective rule designed to return Argentina to an elected government. The desire of the military to accelerate the return to a representative democracy was largely responsible for the ouster of President Ongania last June and may have been the most serious point of disagreement with Levingston, who wanted to wait four or five years.*

Lanusse seems to have the necessary support in the military to carry out a more rapid return to civilian government. All major troop commanders rallied to the general's side when Levingston announced he was being removed.

> *This support could weaken quickly if Lanusse fails to demonstrate early progress in solving the nation's pressing political and economic problems.*

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LAOS

Defense Minister Sisouk accompanied Prime Minister Souvanna on a visit to Luang Prabang yesterday. Sisouk later said he believed the situation had stabilized but he expressed dismay that government units north and northeast of the town had fled in the face of what he believed was a small enemy force of some 300 to 400 attackers. Sisouk has ordered two generals and several other officers from the General Staff to move to the royal capital to assume control of all tactical operations in Military Region 1. General Vang Pao, commander of Military Region 2, has also visited Luang Prabang and has ordered the move of some 850 of his irregulars to reinforce the town and clear the area.

King Savang, assuming a more active role, has commanded that government units recapture the positions nearest the airfield. The King canceled his traditional appearance at Army Day in Vientiane yesterday in order to remain in Luang Prabang; his continued presence there should help to calm the jittery residents.

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COMMUNIST CHINA - JAPAN

[redacted] Chou En-lai remarked that Japanese Government leaders are welcome to visit China at any time. He singled out the "present prime minister and foreign minister." 50X1

Chou's statement stands in marked contrast to Peking's public posture of irreconcilable hostility toward the Sato government. Chou can hardly expect this gesture to be acted on, but his remarks suggest that Peking is prepared to deal with Sato if it finds an opportunity to make a significant change in key bilateral issues.

The most important of these issues appears to be Tokyo's relations with Taiwan. Peking's new flexibility is designed to forestall the possibility that Japan, as a result of its large economic stake in the island, will replace the United States as "protector" of the Nationalist regime. Peking recently underlined its concern on this issue when it for the first time demanded that Tokyo abrogate the Japan-Taiwan peace treaty of 1950 as a "condition" to establish diplomatic relations.

[redacted] *Chou En-lai recently encouraged the visit of many more "leftist" businessmen to China and defined as leftist anyone who "visualized" severing relations with Taipei. This formulation is clearly meant to suggest to Japanese business circles that mainland markets will prove more fruitful than those in Taiwan.* 50X1

Peking's rigid policy toward Japan until now has stood in contrast to its conciliatory attitude toward most of the rest of the world in the past year. This approach has neither undercut the Sato government nor appreciably arrested a drift toward a "one China, one Taiwan" policy in Tokyo. Chou's recent remarks suggest that Peking is now considering substituting honey for vinegar in its Japan policy.

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ARAB FEDERATION

A four-state union bringing together Egypt, Syria, Libya, and the Sudan will be announced on Sunday if Libyan-Sudanese differences can be resolved, according to Arab press circles. Failing this, a three-state union, excluding the Sudan, will be formed. The union is to encompass defense, foreign, and economic affairs.

The decision to proceed with the formal union likely was confirmed during President Sadat's unannounced one-day trip to Libya last week. Sadat, fully aware of the popular opposition to such a federation in both Libya and the Sudan, has heretofore resisted Libyan Premier Qadhafi's calls for unification. Sadat may now believe, however, that at least a facade of a united front will help maintain Arab support for his policy of negotiations.

Sadat may also hope Syria's inclusion will generate additional domestic support for President Asad. Since he came to power last November, Asad has muted Damascus' opposition to a negotiated settlement and has endorsed Cairo's stand.

The Sudanese position on joining the union is still unclear. President Numayri, moving cautiously on an issue unpopular in the Sudan, has insisted on a protracted timetable for formal union. His position has caused Qadhafi to react critically and there have been some bitter exchanges between the two.

Despite the broad scope of the planned merger, it is not likely that effective political integration is in the cards.

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NOTES

Pakistan: President Yahya, after a meeting with Bhutto and Mujib, has postponed the convening of the National Assembly that had been scheduled to begin writing a new constitution on Thursday. [redacted] he and Mujib have already agreed to the broad outlines of a solution. Although many details remain to be worked out, martial law would end, civilian provincial governments would begin to function, and an interim national cabinet formed. With all parties apparently in agreement that more time is needed for negotiations among the political leaders, it seems unlikely there will be a repetition of the violence that followed Yahya's earlier postponement of the assembly on 1 March.

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Turkey: Prime minister - designate Erim now has received pledges of support from both major parties, although the second largest, the Republican People's Party, apparently split over the issue. He is reported intending to select up to half of his cabinet ministers from among independents and from outside Parliament. The threat of an ultimate military take-over persists, and many Turks view Erim as "a last chance" for some time to come. Although the nationwide military alert has been relaxed, security precautions in some areas have actually been tightened because of new warnings of leftist terrorism.

USSR-Japan: The Japanese Communist Party will attend the Soviet party congress which opens next week. This decision resulted from recent consultations between the two parties in Moscow, and, as a concession, the Soviets apparently have pledged to cease their support of a pro-Soviet Japanese Communist splinter group. It does not appear that the parties reconciled their conflicting ideological views on such issues as the invasion of Czechoslovakia, but the wording of their joint communiqué suggests that they agreed to keep their differences private. The presence of the Japanese party at the congress will be a significant gain for Moscow and may benefit politburo member Suslov, who apparently was instrumental in easing the strained relations between the two parties.

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